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ABSTRACT

The presentation focuses on the status of disabled persons in the world, notes progress made in improved living conditions for the disabled, and considers implications for libraries serving disabled clients. Services currently offered in academic libraries are described, as are goals related to four aims specified by the United Nations during the Decade of Disabled Persons (prevention, services, participation, and awareness). Among prevention related services cited are efforts to reduce opportunities for injury and to maintain safety plans for fire or other emergencies. Library services for the disabled are discussed, including orientation for students regarding equipment and procedures. Librarians are urged to be aware of trends in information services for and about disabled persons. The aim of participation is addressed in terms of a program to give disabled students temporary or part time employment in the library system as well as integration of information on disabilities into the basic master's course in library science. The fourth aim, public awareness, is examined in terms of direct and indirect methods of community education. Recommendations include emphasis on marketing and dissemination aspects. (CL)

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ACADEMIC LIBRARY SERVICE TO DISABLED STUDENTS: TODAY AND TOMORROW

by

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DISABLED STUDENTS: TODAY AND TOMORROW

by

Elizabeth W. Stone

Introduction

As I understand it, this is to be a working conference which is to challenge you as people of action to learn the state-of-the-art of academic library service to disabled students--and also to act as people dedicated to providing quality academic library service to disabled students. I believe that everything is more meaningful when presented within a context, and I have therefore chosen to put my remarks in the perspective of what is being proposed around the world today to meet the needs of the disabled.

As one looks ahead to the coming decade, it is all too easy to be pessimistic, but with a little more effort, we can take an optimistic stance by visualizing the many opportunities for advancing the cause of the disabled and by setting for ourselves specific targets in our efforts to bring about a new era for disabled students.

Size and Scope of the Problem

It is important that those who want to improve the quality of life and of education for disabled people first make themselves and all those with whom they come in contact familiar with the size and the scale of the problem of disability.

There are still many people who wrongly believe that the disabled are only a tiny minority, whereas there are actually over 35 million in the United States today and more than 500 million people in the world who suffer as a consequence

of physical, mental, or sensory impairment. But even these figures do not tell us anything like the whole story, for disability and rehabilitation are family affairs: if one of our students is disabled, then the whole family is involved. It is the United Nations' estimate that 25 percent of the world's population is involved in problems of disability, either directly--as disabled people--or indirectly--through their families. This figure was widely thought to be an exaggeration when it was first published. However, a Gallup Poll taken in Great Britain in 1981 showed that, of all those interviewed, 29 percent belonged to the families of disabled persons. Far from exaggerating, the United Nations was shown to have understated the extent of personal involvement in the problems of disability in Great Britain. The disabled of the world "are entitled to the same rights as all other human beings and to equal opportunities. Too often their lives are handicapped by physical and social barriers in society, which hamper their full participation." (U.N. World Programme of Action, 1982, p. 19)

It has been estimated that some nine million disabled persons are enrolled in institutions of higher education. (Needham, 1977, p. 273) Further, it is anticipated that the 1980's will see an increasing number of hearing impaired persons enrolled in academic institutions, particularly junior/community colleges--in part because of secondary school streamlining efforts encouraged by PL 94-142 (The Education of All Handicapped Children Act) but also as a result of the rubella epidemic of 1963-1965: statistics from the Office of Demographic Studies show an estimated total of 19,729 children with hearing impairments born between 1963 and 1965, as compared with 9,715 born 1960-62 and 12,186 born 1966-68. (Ritter, 1981, p. 21)

And regardless of the estimated numbers of disabled persons in various environments, we must remember, if we want to counteract the balance of ignorance

that does so much to reinforce the barriers against the disabled, that we are all potentially involved in the problems of disability. Even if we are neither disabled ourselves nor have anyone disabled in our families, and even if we are able to escape handicaps brought about by ill health or accident, almost all of us will become disabled at some stage in our lives, if only as a result of the aging process. The problems of disability are ultimately those not of a minority but of the vast majority of people.

If, therefore, in our colleges and universities there are physical and attitudinal barriers that prevent disabled people from using library facilities that everyone else takes for granted, these same obstacles will, at some time in our lives, most probably become barriers against us, too. In a speech to the Library Association of Great Britain in September 1981, which I had the privilege of hearing, the Right Honorable Alfred Morris, Member of Parliament, author of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act of Great Britain, and First Minister for the Disabled in the United Kingdom, emphasized the following point:

> It is this ultimate personal involvement that all of us must come to recognize if we are further to improve the well-being and status of disabled people in contemporary society. For it is irrefutably the case that, by acting now to make life better for disabled people, we shall almost certainly also be helping ourselves and our own families in the future. (Morris, 1981, p. ii)

It is difficult now for anyone to remember what life was like before the passing of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This landmark act was the first Federal civil rights legislation designed to protect the rights of the handicapped and to end discrimination on the basis of handicap. The act provides that:

> No otherwise qualified handicapped individual...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. (29 U.S.C. 794, 1976)

This mandate to end discrimination and bring the handicapped into the mainstream of American life is a reminder of how far we have come in the past decade. Quantum leaps have been recorded in the number of disabled people helped. Yet, very much remains to be done if the act is to achieve its full purpose, viz, to promote the independence of disabled people by giving them the right help in the right place and at the right time and, by doing so, to end the segregation and discrimination from which they have suffered so long and so much.

All of this can happen, if we will--both in our private and working lives and as members of associations--help to achieve the goals of the handicapped by bringing them into the mainstream of our society. This mandate represents a challenge to all elements of society, and librarians are no exception. In fact, libraries enjoy a position of special importance because, not only are they prime sources of the information that can help to dispel the myths and fallacies that compound the problems of the disabled in seeking to normalize their lives, but,at the same time,they help disabled people directly with information on matters of interest and value specifically to them.

Charter for the 1980's

One of the initiatives that called the needs of the disabled to the attention of many people who had not given them a thought before, was the 1981 International Year for Disabled Persons. This, in turn, led to the National Year for Disabled Persons in the United States, 1982, and has led, on a worldwide basis, to the formation by the United Nations of a Worldwide Committee

which drafted a "Charter for the 1980's" on behalf of the 500 million disabled people worldwide. Members of this World Committee, chaired by Member of Parliament Alfred Morris, came from north, south, east, and west, from rich and poor countries alike. And in the words of Rehabilitation International, the Charter for the 1980's "is based on the most extensive international consultation ever undertaken in its field, and its text has been reviewed at national and international conferences in every region of the world." (Morris, 1981, p. 5) The Charter has four main aims, summarized by Morris (Morris, 1981, p. 6) as follows (italics mine):

1. To save as many people as possible from becoming disabled by maximizing the prevention of disability.
2. To reduce the handicapping effects of disability by provision of adequate rehabilitation services.
3. To ensure that disabled people are a part of and not apart from society and that they can participate fully in the life of their communities.
4. To promote full public awareness of the problems of disabled people and of their right to social equality.

The Charter contains 66 recommendations and urges every country to adopt an action plan for the achievement, within this decade, of its four main aims--with the action plan covering all aspects of national life and involving every agency that can make life better for disabled individuals. The Charter insists that the problem is one not so much of resources as of political will and priority. It emphasizes that the disabled have abilities as well as disabilities, that they have the right of access to the environment and to information, and that such access is essential if they are to live full and fulfilling lives.

In order to spearhead the implementation of the "Charter for the 1980's," the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed, on December 3, 1982, the period

1983 to 1992 as the Decade of Disabled Persons and urged each nation to carry out its decade program in a manner suitable to its stage of development and the nature of its society. In the United States, the organization which is spearheading this program is the National Organization on Disability (NOD). It is aggressively carrying the challenge of the Decade of the Disabled to communities and organizations, nationwide.

We can be proud, I think, that the American Library Association, Gallaudet College, and the National Stroke Recovery Foundation were, as national partners, the first groups to issue resolutions in support of the Decade. (NOD Report, Spring 1983, p. 1) The Decade of the Disabled is important because it provides a framework for structuring domestic and international activity to benefit the disabled.

On Tuesday, April 5, 1983, a Congressional hearing was held at which representatives of various sectors of American life testified. The written testimony submitted at that hearing will be published and will be distributed widely.

In essence, the Decade of the Disabled will have as its overall goal the implementation of the "Charter for the 1980's," and I would like to group the rest of my remarks around the aims of that Charter.

Definitions

It would be useful to our discussion if we take a few moments at this point to define some of the terms we are using with respect to handicapped and disabled individuals. The following distinctions are made by the World Health Organization, in the context of health experience, between impairment, disability, and handicap:

> Impairment: any loss or abnormality of psychological or anatomical structure or function, Disability: any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. Handicap: a disadvantage for a given individual resulting from an impairment or disability that limits or prevents the fulfillment of a role that is normal, depending on age, sex, social and cultural factors, for that individual.

The World Health Organization continues:

> Handicap is therefore a function of the relationship between disabled persons and their environment. It occurs when they encounter cultural, physical, or social barriers which prevent their access to the various systems of society that are available to other citizens. Thus, handicap is the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the life of the community on an equal level with others.
>
> Disabled people do not form a homogeneous group. For example, the mentally ill and the mentally retarded; the visually, hearing, and speech impaired; those with restricted mobility or with so-called "medical disabilities" all encounter different barriers of different kinds, which have to be overcome in different ways.
>
> The following definitions are developed from that perspective. The relevant terms of action proposed...are defined as prevention, rehabilitation, and equalization of opportunities.
>
> Prevention means measures aimed at preventing the onset of mental, physical, and sensory impairments (primary prevention) or at preventing impairment, when it has occurred, from having negative physical, psychological, and social consequences.
>
> Rehabilitation means a goal-oriented and time-limited process aimed at enabling an impaired person to reach an optimum level, thus providing her or him with the tools to change her or his own life. It can involve measures intended to compensate for a loss of function or a functional limitation (for example, by technical aids) and other measures intended to facilitate social adjustment or readjustment.

> Equalization of opportunities means the process through which the general system of society, such as the physical and cultural environment, housing and transportation, social and health services, educational and work opportunities, cultural and social life, including sports and recreational facilities, are made accessible to all. (U.N. World Programme of Action, 1982, pp. 20-21)

I would digress from official definitions for a moment to read you a definition of handicapped written by a disabled student at Catholic University. It was the opening of an editorial in the student newspaper, The Tower. It is a student expression of the very philosophy we have been discussing.

> During the past week, the University has focused attention on a well known, misunderstood and underestimated subgroup in our world--the handicapped.. Much has been written on the subject of being handicapped by people who call themselves experts--people who have no abnormal physical disabilities. But what does it really mean to be handicapped? Who has a handicap? How does one look or feel about being handicapped?
>
> To start, let me first define handicapped. We all have handicaps in one form or another, and we all tend to deal with these problems differently because each one of us is a unique human being. People are handicapped just because they are not better than the next person at a particular skill. For example, one may be handicapped because he or she cannot hit a baseball as far as Reggie Jackson, just because he or she is weaker than the baseball player. Big deal! We can all do something better than Reggie Jackson. When we talk about having a physical disability, we talk of those who have skills below the norms set down by the majority who are not afflicted by a physical disability. Some people are born with physical disabilities; others develop them in one form or another. (Bonnacci, The Tower, Vol. 61, No. 20, April 15, 1983, p. 13)

Keeping in mind the fundamental principles enunciated in the "Charter for the 1980's" but recognizing that the capability of individual libraries and institutions to take actions for disability prevention and rehabilitation will vary according to their priorities and the availability of resources, I would like to set forth a few examples of what is being done now in academic libraries,

and to suggest, for possible consideration, targets of action relative to each of the four aims--prevention, services, participation, and awareness--during the Decade of the Disabled. I hope that these suggested targets may raise some issues, present some ideas, suggest some priorities, and stimulate some innovations.

Aim #1: To save as many people as possible from becoming disabled by maximizing the prevention of disability. Although it seems almost too obvious to mention, libraries should routinely check their physical facilities to be sure that no conditions exist which can cause accidents not only to handicapped, but to the nonhandicapped. One problem is cords from various types of electrical equipment. Two weeks before coming here, I had an eight-week old cast removed from a broken arm caused by my tripping over a cord lying loosely on a floor; so I can speak to the importance of simple precautions with respect to one hazard. Other hazards that one might not think of include revolving doors and elevators that close too rapidly.

In addition, certain inconspicuous design features can help prevent accidents. For example, partitions without projecting baseboards are less likely to trip a person on crutches or someone with visual problems; and if the edges and corners of work surfaces are rounded, there is less likely to be injury resulting from those accidental confrontations between person and table or desk. (Begg, 1982, p. 16) Such features cost little, especially if taken into consideration when new equipment is bought, and they make for much safer and more comfortable environments for the disabled.

In short, it is important to be aware of preventive measures to help the handicapped, such as talking with them and thus learning what they perceive would be helpful and safe rather than waiting for them to ask or leaving them

to struggle along without any service. An example of what can be done is the practice of the Catholic University law librarian who personally interviews all the disabled students enrolled in the University law school. For example, one student with whom the law librarian was particularly successful had cerebral palsy and was almost totally confined to the wheelchair, with extremely limited use of his hands and arms. As a result of the interview, these were perceived to be that student's needs:

- First, he needed an assigned seat where he knew he could always go and spread out his materials. He wanted this seat so located that he could see a clock, as he was unable to wear any kind of watch.
- He needed to sit at a study table so constructed that the tray on top of his wheelchair would fit under the top of the table, so that he could spread materials on the table.
- He also needed seating close to the circulation desk, so that attendants could conveniently bring him books and retrieve books from the bookbag he wore on his back.
- He needed a place to store a specially designed typewriter that was extremely sensitive to what little sense of touch he had.
- He needed space to turn his wheelchair around in the aisles, and the stacks in the main reference area were widened to accommodate not only him but other wheelchair-confined persons.

This particular student was unable to take books from the shelves himself, but for other wheelchair-confined persons who could lift books from shelves at certain heights, a special shelf arrangement was made. It was found that in the law library there were many duplicate sets of books, and the librarian arranged

the stack collection so that several middle-level shelves would be left empty to allow books to be rested there at convenient wheelchair height, if needed only briefly. One copy of each such set was placed at wheelchair height and the other on a higher shelf. Of course, such shelf arrangements are possible only if there are duplicate volumes--or so much space that all shelving can be within reach of the wheelchair-confined.

Suggested targets for prevention-related action might include:

- Adoption by the library of regularly monitored policies and procedures to prevent accidents and reduce injuries to all those who enter.
- Development of programs of prevention coordinated with those of other units on the campus, such as security, maintenance, and housekeeping.
- Development and enforcement of safety regulations and training programs for prevention of accidents in the library.
- Development of a detailed plan of action in event of fire, including a plan which locates all disabled employees in the library and provides for their systematic removal from the building.
- Adaptation of jobs, equipment, and the working environment to prevent the generation of disabilities.
- Provision and distribution of informational packages that will assist students in attaining lifestyles that will provide maximum defense against impairment.
- Sustained education of students and employees, as well as public information campaigns, related to disability prevention programs.
- Adequate training of specifically designated persons to deal with potential emergencies that might cause bodily injury.
- Well-organized practical on-the-job training of library employees with a view to preventing accidents at work and resulting disabilities of varying degrees and kinds.

Aim #2: Reducing handicapping effects of disability by the provision of adequate rehabilitation and service support systems. It is mandated by law that librarians take the necessary steps to make their libraries and services accessible both to library patrons and to library employees. Barriers in the library environment need to be identified and action taken to eliminate or counteract them. Such action can often be a matter of common sense and not so costly as it may seem when one first reads the regulation. In all cases regulations for compliance by existing facilities are less stringent than those for new or altered facilities.

It is important to remember that the Rehabilitation Act calls not only for physical access to buildings but for program accessibility. The regulations were carefully written to indicate this distinction. (43 Fed. Reg. 36,034, 1978) In addition, services must be accessible even if no impaired persons are known to need them.

Beyond the legal duties to provide access to program services and facilities, there exists a professional responsibility to meet the needs of handicapped patrons in a nondiscriminatory fashion. Surprisingly enough, the Library Bill of Rights does not recognize this specific responsibility. It is mentioned neither in the first draft of the Bill of Rights nor in succeeding drafts, the last one of which is dated January 11, 1979.

If a library plans to offer special services for the handicapped it is necessary for it to have an organizational plan. At Catholic University, we have a group coordinated by the Associate Dean of Students for Special Services; within that group, the Facilitator of Library Services to the Handicapped (appointed by the Director of Libraries) plays a major role and is responsible, along with a Standing Committee for Library Services to the Handicapped, for

the total coordination and implementation of library services to handicapped patrons. (The Catholic University of America, 1980, p. 1) The group includes not only faculty members, officers of the administration, and non-disabled students, but also representative disabled students. The overall responsibility of the group is for "assessing the special needs of disabled students and developing and providing service and support to handicapped students, and to work with faculty, students, and staff to develop appropriate solutions to the problems of accessibility." (The Catholic University of America, 1982, p. 2)

Once you have recognized your legal and professional responsibility toward the disabled, it is time to identify problem areas and their solutions both in programs and services. This is where the two barriers, physical and attitudinal, become very obvious. First, a word about physical barriers; attitudinal barriers will be discussed later.

It takes sensitivity to the needs of the handicapped to identify some of the physical barriers that may not be obvious to ablebodied persons but are quite apparent to the majority of disabled students. It is worthwhile to remember that almost any measure you adopt to help the disabled will also help other segments of your library's clientele. At Catholic University, we have from time to time used simulation techniques, inviting members of the staff and others on the campus to spend a day in a wheelchair so as to see how accessible to the wheelchair-confined the library and other buildings are.

Testing physical access to buildings should start in parking areas, which should be accessible, functional, safe, and convenient and should fit into the framework of an overall system. (Begg, 1978, p. 14) The next possible barrier to accessibility is usually the building entrance, which characteristically has

steps. If a ramp needs to be built, it should have a gentle slope, easy for a person in a wheelchair to negotiate. Doors should be wide enough for wheelchairs and, of course, a revolving door is an impossibility for a wheelchair-confined person and, indeed, is difficult for disabled people in general.

Inside the library there should be a map showing barrier-free routes leading to its various service areas. A map posted at wheelchair level is helpful, as is a tactile map usable by blind persons. The barrier-free routes within the library should permit access to all pertinent sections of the collection available to the nondisabled. Elevators large enough to accommodate wheelchairs are absolutely necessary; and all controls should be within reachable height.

Since I note from the conference program that specific standards for building are to be presented later, I will not go into specifics here, except to say that whatever adjustments you make should be fully explained to all disabled students.

At the beginning of each semester at Catholic University, an orientation session is held in the library for all those who have been identified as disabled. Identification of and initial contact with handicapped students is made by the University Equal Opportunity Officer, who in turn usually gets this information from the admissions office. The Equal Opportunity Officer gives names to the Facilitator of Library Services to the Handicapped who in turn invites each student to the orientation. An open invitation is also extended through the student newspaper or other appropriate means. This orientation includes an introduction to subject librarians, as appropriate, as well as to the divisional libraries most relevant to the students' areas of study. (The Catholic University of America, 1980, p. 3) The services to the handicapped offered by

the library and the university are also explained, e.g., reading for the blind, the availability of teletypewriters and technical communications systems to the hearing impaired, tape recorders, electric typewriters, mobility aids, recordings for the blind, and whatever special staff assistance is available, as well as how to get registration assistance and informational and referral services. An incidental benefit of this orientation session is that it allows disabled students to know others who are disabled.

The Catholic University library also has a special room for the handicapped which includes TTY, recording apparatus, provisions for listening to tapes and records and, provides a private place for disabled persons within the library where they may use various kinds of equipment without disturbing other library users.

The services offered at Catholic University are not unusual; in fact, they are quite routine now in most academic settings. The unusual feature is that because the university's financial resources are very limited, what has been accomplished has been due largely to the initiative and the innovative approaches of the library's committee on service to the disabled, both in influencing administrators and staff to be concerned about the problems of the handicapped and in finding ways to get funds for special equipment. Concern is evidenced by service that is both tactful and helpful and which is based on interviews conducted with handicapped persons themselves in order to find out what they really need.

The philosophy of the library's program should include the premises (1) that disabled persons are all unique individuals, just as other persons are, and (2) that no person can be served adequately without one's finding out what service is most needed by, and will be most helpful to, him or her. It has been

found at Catholic University that students complain far less about the physical limitations of the facilities than they do about the level of service they may receive.

No "Decade for the Disabled" can be successful without the use of information available through computer technology; librarians will need to make provision for this type of access. One automated reference source some librarians may not be aware of is the National Rehabilitation Information Center, located in our School of Library and Information Science at Catholic University and funded by the National Institute of Handicapped Research, U.S. Department of Education. This center provides, upon request, printouts of articles, abstracts, and research reports, and has one rehabilitation database (REHABDATA) containing thousands of items with brief abstracts available through the Bibliographic Retrieval Service (BRS) or directly from NARIC, and another called ABLEDATA, which lists essential information about mechanical and technical products of use to the disabled. A list of services available from NARIC is provided upon request. A large proportion of NARIC's collection--some 3,000 items of research findngs, case histories, surveys, and handbooks--is available commercially as an indexed, packaged set of microfiche through Microfilming Corporation of America, a subsidiary of The New York Times. A thesaurus has been created, a newsletter--The Pathfinder--has been published, and many bibliographies have been generated. Individual reference questions, including those received on the TDD (Telecommunication Device for the Deaf) system, are handled by searching NARIC's resources, as well as such related databases as ERIC, NTIS, MEDLARS, and Psychological Abstracts.

Not only can disabled students be served more effectively by making use of NARIC's resources, but wide use of them can help to ensure funding by the Federal government.

In thinking about librarians' professional relationship to the disabled, it is important to realize that disabled persons can be fully served only if librarians work in cooperation with other service professions which provide medicine and therapy, education, and vocational training. In particular, closer relationships must be developed with the rehabilitation community. Often it seems as if librarians and rehabilitation personnel operate as if unaware of the roles each group can play. (Velleman, 1979, ix-x) They seem oblivious to the reality that, working together, they can achieve much in the way of helping the disabled. The National Rehabilitation Information Center is an example of an effort to narrow the gap between librarianship and rehabilitation. It is an example that represents a step in the integration of the two fields and also demonstrates the role rehabilitation librarians can play.

In the area of service to the disabled and in keeping with the philosophy and recommendations of the "Charter for the 1980's", what are some of the goals we should set for ourselves? I suggest the following for your consideration during the "Decade of the Disabled."

1. Become knowledgeable professionals in the areas in which special services are available. One needs to know not only what disabilities are but how various agencies (academic institutions, hospitals, police) relate to individuals with such disabilities. For the disabled, as with most nondisabled, library service is most effective when correlated with other systems of service--or even integrated into vast super networks.
2. Be alert to future trends in information services for and about disabled individuals. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- The development of more formal networking arrangements to take better advantage of collections, staff expertise, and available technology.

- The increasing use of telecommunications to retrieve and disseminate information, both for professionals and for disabled users. For the consumer, this may mean access to a wide variety of information through cable television and home computer terminals; for the professional it means increased use of computerized data banks and computer conferencing to exchange information.

- Further development of existing and creation of new data banks in the field of rehabilitation that will provide total source documents. Data banks will tend to be more problem-oriented.

- Increased use of computerized management information systems for patient/client information and problem analysis.

- Progress in the standardization of rehabilitation terminology, in indexing and abstracting procedures, and in the organization of documents and lists of devices.

- Emphasis on the education of users or rehabilitation information services because of the advances in technology and more complete access to rehabilitation resources.

3. Keep currently aware of standards developed for service, for accessibility of library buildings and facilities, and for collection building.

4. Encourage creativity in the design of retrieval systems, remembering that the physically disabled tend to be handicapped in one or more of these four respects:

    - In their ability to go to places where data are stored

    - In their ability to communicate their needs and their reactions

    - In their ability to sense, i.e., to receive, messages via the usual senses or combinations of senses

    - In their ability to manipulate objects--books, pencils, typewriter keyboards, and heavy objects. There is much to be learned in this area from engineering designers. At advanced levels, joint programs in library science and engineering should be considered. (Stone, 1980, pp. 25-26)

Aim #3: Participation and involvement. The third aim of the "Charter for the 1980's" is to ensure that disabled people are part of and not apart from society and that they can participate fully and be involved in the life of whatever communities they are parts of. In the academic setting, one of the important rights of disabled people is to participate in decisions which will concern their own lives as students. It is of primary importance that they have a chance to participate in any kind of task forces or committees charged with servicing the disabled. They must also have an opportunity to participate in all the ordinary processes of decision making in which students participate, such as being represented in the university's student governing bodies.

The Charter states that "integration with the life of the community is the most important aspect of the total process known as rehabilitation...It is only through integration and full participation that a person can achieve his or her maximum level of independence and functioning in life." (Charter for the 1980's," p. 8) Under the heading "Integration and Participation in the Learning Environment," the Charter specifies that disabled adults be educated to their highest potential levels of achievement in accordance with the range of possibilities available. (Charter for the 1980's," p. 9) Colleges and universities are responsible for making every effort to arrange programs of study that are appropriate to the individuals concerned and have the obligation of finding financial support for those expenses which are especially disability-related. Under the heading "Integration and Participation in the Working Environment," colleges and universities have an obligation to provide counseling and career guidance services which would provide up-to-date information on employment developments and opportunities, job entry requirements, and career prospects relating to the qualifications, aptitudes, physical capacities, preferences, and experience of the individual disabled persons concerned.

opportunities for appropriate testing of capacities and aptitudes, as well as the adjustment of individuals to working conditions, and the development of appropriate competencies.

In considering these recommendations in terms of the library at Catholic University, we have found that the opportunity for temporary and/or part-time employment of disabled persons in the library system is one way for disabled persons to gain some experience in a work place, and that it provides them with a transition to regular and/or full-time positions. We have also found that it is an excellent way for disabled persons to come to feel that they are of service to others and not always and inevitably dependent upon what others do for them. This tends to develop feelings of self-respect and self-value, which are just as important to disabled as to nondisabled persons.

It is also very important for faculty to understand the abilities as well as the limitations of various categories of disabled students. Accordingly, there is in the CUA "Faculty Handbook of Service to Disabled Students" a section on overcoming barriers in meeting the needs of disabled students, followed by fact sheets on deaf/hearing impairment; blind/visual impairment; learning disabilities; and university policies for assisting students with such medical disabilities as cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and heart disease. Each of these fact sheets defines the particular disability and its effect, its causes, the types of disability most commonly met with, the extent of the disability in the total population, and information on how it can be prevented and treated--with the longest section in each case being helpful hints on dealing with students with the particular disability.

The participation/involvement aim in the Charter also has implications for those responsible for planning and developing library science curricula.

A variety of solutions have been tested by those responsible for planning and developing library and information science curricula, but, thus far, none has been uniformly accepted as the best way.

Leaders in the field, especially as part of a broader focus on outreach service, have been Margaret Monroe at the University of Wisconsin, Genevieve Casey at Wayne State University, Harris McClaskey at the University of Minnesota, Lucille Whalen at the State University of New York at Albany, and especially Gerald Jahoda of Florida State University, as is so well demonstrated by this workshop in which we are now participating.

In 1977, a survey entitled "Preparing Librarians to Serve Handicapped Individuals" was carried out by Merrillyn Gibson, Reference Librarian at the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Seventy-three percent of the 59 schools responding indicated that they were not interested in offering courses or programs to prepare librarians to serve the disabled. Of the 12 schools that offered courses dealing specifically with library services to the handicapped, 11 offered only one such course. In contrast, one school, Catholic University, offered nine. Fifteen percent of the schools did, however, offer workshops or short-term seminars. (Gibson, 1977, p. 125)

In a similar study carried out by Gibson in 1980, there was revealed a slight improvement. A greater number of schools were offering courses, incorporating relevant material into other courses, or offering workshops. Only 65 percent of the 26 schools responding indicated that they had no courses in this area and had no plans for them in the future. (Gibson, 1981, p. 4)

The overall impressions that one gains from these surveys are that there is not a solid commitment throughout library education programs to preparing students to serve the disabled, and that it is certainly not a priority consideration

and in many cases, is not even an issue.

At Catholic University, even though we felt that the need for specialization to serve the disabled was great, there was little demand from the field for persons with such specialization at the master's level, and enrollment in the mini-course specialization was so small that it constituted a significant financial loss, from the point of view of the University; the nine-course specialization was therefore changed into a post-master's program entitled "Mainstreaming Special Users," directed at experienced librarians who want to strengthen their management skills, update their technical background, and interact with other leaders in the field of library service to the disabled. The 24-hour curriculum includes advanced management and technology courses designed to meet individual needs and interests, and includes subject seminars, and (if desired) tutorials, practica, and internships. Seminars include (1) User Groups: Issues and Problems in the Handicapped Field and (2) The Institution and the Disadvantaged. The practica provide participants with first-hand experiences in libraries which provide specialized handicapped services, and the tutorials provide interface with experts in the areas selected by participants. For 1983-1984, we have been awarded three Title II-B Fellowships for persons wishing to study for post-master's certificates with specialization in service to the disabled.

Recently we have developed at the master's level a comprehensive specialization in Health Sciences and Information Services in affiliation with the Georgetown University Medical Center. The program has three tracks from which a student may choose for concentration--one being in Consumer Health and Rehabilitation Information Services.

In addition, we try in various ways to integrate into our basic master's course information and concepts about the needs of the disabled for library and information services. As efforts are intensified to move disabled individuals into the mainstream of American life, more and more disabled individuals will be using libraries of all kinds. Librarians should, therefore, become aware of the needs of this clientele and should gain understanding and knowledge and the competencies to provide this clientele quality library and information service. A pioneering effort on how best to incorporate into library school curricula materials and instruction regarding services for the blind and physically handicapped was carried out by Dr. Jahoda during 1978. This was done by means of a Title II-B HEA Institute for library educators from 20 schools to brainstorm on how best to achieve this objective. The most concentrated work of the year-long program was done during one week in August when the library educators came together and shared ideas regarding the knowledge, skills, and concepts that should be integrated into existing curricula.

What are some concepts dealing with the information needs of the disabled that, in the opinion of leaders, should be integrated into the general curriculum rather than relegated to a few separate courses?

Whalen (1981, pp. 51-54) lists those she considers most essential. These include: understanding the rights of disabled individuals as set forth in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; understanding the statutes dealing with the employment rights of the disabled; familiarity with the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142); knowledge of such basic resources as Velleman's Serving Physically Disabled People: An Information Handbook for All Libraries, the data bases of the National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC), and the services of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically

Handicapped of the Library of Congress, encouragement of students to carry out research in the area of library services for the disabled; attitudinal change toward disabled persons to dispel myths about disability (and encouragement of the reading of such works as Frank Bowe's Handicapping America and Beatrice Wright's Physical Disability: A Psychological Approach); and recognition of the importance of recruiting handicapped persons for library education programs. Whalen concludes with a plea that librarians and library educators play an advocacy role in helping the disabled maintain their rights. If such a role seems too strong for some, she suggests that they can at least "provide information which helps dispel some of the myths which create barriers for those with disabilities." (Whalen, 1981, p. 54)

A recent attempt to learn what is being done and could be done to educate persons to provide library and information services to disabled persons was a Symposium in July 1981 sponsored by the American Library Association, the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the School of Library and Information Science of Catholic University and the National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC). The Symposium was organized as one activity of the library community in recognition of the International Year of Disabled Persons. Included in the proceedings (available from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped) are descriptions of current programs by Jahoda, McClaskey, Velleman, and others. Two speakers dealt especially with concepts that might and should be integrated into a total library school curriculum: Eleanor Biscoe, Director of NARIC, and Blanche Woolls, Professor at the University of Pittsburgh.

Biscoe focused on the need for "library educators to ensure that the picture of disabled persons as independent within the context of their disabilities

is presently adequately throughout the curricula. Only by dealing with the attitudinal level about independent and dependent dimensions of disability can we successfully share knowledge about how to provide library services to disabled persons—that is, services that actually meet the needs of individual disabled persons seeking some form of library service." She commented further: "In our efforts to serve disabled persons, we must be vigilant that we actually meet needs based not upon our assumptions about what disabled persons need but upon facts learned through dialogue with various disabled citizens." (Kraus and Biscoe, 1982, p. 12)

Woolls, in her presentation at the Symposium, made 15 suggestions as to ways to enhance the capabilities of prospective professionals to serve disabled persons while they are pursuing their library school studies. (Kraus and Biscoe, 1982 , pp. 18-20)

With respect to this area of "participation, integration, and involvement," I should like to suggest the following targets for action for us to consider:

- The assurance to disabled students of their participation in decisions concerning the response, within our libraries, to their service needs
- The encouragement of incorporation into library school programs of the multidisciplinary approach to dealing with those preparing to serve the handicapped
- The adoption of active measures designed to facilitate the employment of disabled students in libraries
- The participation by professional librarians in national organizations which have a concern for the disabled, such as the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies of the American Library Association

- The recruitment of librarians who wish to make their careers in rehabilitation librarianship
- The incorporation of information on the nature of major disabilities and the rehabilitation process into the training of librarians to serve the handicapped
- The encouragement to library schools to integrate basic types of information about the disabled and their needs for library service into the regular courses in their masters' programs.

This last suggestion is not easy, especially when so many factions are continually bombarding library educators with their lists of what "must" be included in and integrated into masters' programs.

In the opinion of this author, the size of the population to be served and the nature of their needs warrant a conscientious effort to deliver this type of learning, although it is difficult to accomplish. If the trend toward a two-year masters' program should grow, the task ought to become somewhat easier to accomplish. (Stone, 1980, p. 27)

Aim #4: Public awareness. The fourth aim of the "Charter for the 1980's" is to promote full public awareness of the problems of disabled people and of their right to social equality. The first principle in the Charter under this aim states:

> The attitudinal and behavioral obstacles to the integration of disabled people into the life of society must be eliminated. For centuries people with disabilities have been stigmatized with an aura of mystery and fear based on ignorance and misinformation. ("Charter for the 1980's, " p. 13)

Access is not just a matter of getting into and about public library buildings. It has a much wider meaning: it also means going inside the

library and being accepted, and this, in turn, means improving public attitudes toward disabled persons.

Both direct and indirect methods of community education about the problems of disability and their solutions should be devised and utilized. One way we found helpful during our campus campaigns was to use simulation techniques with nondisabled students and faculty. One day, for example, our then President, Dr. Edmund D. Pelligrino, spent a whole day on the campus in a wheelchair. On other occasions, students and library employees have (with an attendant to prevent injuries) gone around the library blindfolded, trying to discover the various routes to and locations of materials and services. Although some people are not in favor of using such simulation techniques, we have found that they have achieved the purpose of increasing awareness of the problems of the disabled as well as making those who witness these activities more aware of the problems which the disabled experience.

In dealing with attitudes, I think one has to realize that one's success or failure in dealing with the disabled is often caused by their own attitudes. A few weeks ago on our campus, we had "Handicapped Awareness Week." During this time two pages in the campus paper, The Tower, were devoted to articles by students and staff on developing more helpful and positive attitudes toward the handicapped. One editorial by a disabled student--the one which I quoted earlier--featured the importance of the outlook of disabled students in breaking down attitudinal barriers. It read in part:

> Two major problems facing all handicapped people are self pity and selfishness. We all face pity in some form or another during periods of hopelessness and frustration. But for the disabled person the problem becomes so strong that it controls every facet of his life. When I did an internship at a cerebral palsy center a couple of years ago, the young people I worked with were bounded in pity. Their motion had no liveliness;

> everything was done in slow motion. There was a lack of spunk. They were telling people to pity them, do all their tasks for them, feel sorry for them. It was like being in a morgue.
>
> Basically, handicapped people have to stop feeling sorry for themselves. They (when I say they, I mean we) have to fight pity with two fists. We must make our own lives useful for ourselves and surrounding us. We have a right to help ourselves and others. There is a need to feel proud and say: I am a human being, not anything less!
>
> People afflicted with a handicap have the ability to help others less fortunate than themselves to become more productive in society. We tend to think only of ourselves because we want help, concern and love, and forget about teaching people what we have learned. This is especially true in our society, which encourages people to say, 'the hell with the other guy, I want something for myself and after I get it, nobody else is going to have a piece.'
>
> On this campus, I find that there are many people willing to help, and this makes the University different than other places I have been. But we all have a long way to go, a long growing process ahead of us. For that special group of people, the handicapped college students, our journey must take on a new dimension. We are role models for others less fortunate than us. We have made our journey through the first part of our lives; now we must keep our battle going, not for ourselves, but for those who need us. It is in this regard that I feel handicapped people must dedicate their lives to others, so that these people can have someone to look up to; this is where we are needed. (Bonnacci, 1983, p. 13)

In many ways, the most pervasive barrier, and the one that may prove the hardest to overcome, is the attitudinal barrier. The most difficult achievement may prove to be the psychologically barrier-free environment. Categorizing people because they look or act differently should never be a reason for taking their information requests lightly or providing them with less than quality service. An example of such service speaks for itself. Recently one of our students with cerebral palsy, who was a straight-A student in all of

his class work, visited a number of libraries in the Washington area to secure archival material in support of a highly technical research paper. He felt that his requests were not being taken seriously and that visits to a number of libraries yielded less information than they might have. Suspecting that those he had approached in person believed he could not possibly handle so complex a research problem, he sent typewritten requests in advance of future visits and was not surprised to find that the libraries in question, indeed, had a great deal of the material he sought.

Public awareness may help to alter the social environment, may challenge the nondisabled public to assess its attitudes towards people with disabilities, and should help people to realize that in many instances it is their negative attitudes and social norms which are the greatest limitation disabled people face.

An exceedingly important consideration in the problem of increasing awareness is the realization that the provision of information requires exploitation of proven marketing and dissemination techniques. If an academic library plans to provide special services to disabled students, such services must be advertised both to the students and to faculty members. If faculty are aware of services provided by the library, they can refer handicapped students to the library for assistance as needed.

Even in a small college or university, it can be difficult to reach all those who need and want the library's services. Although it is an example from a public library situation, I would like to tell you about the experience of one of our MLS graduates, the Rev. Patrick Martin, Ph.D.: it demonstrates the difficulty of finding the disabled and letting them know about the information, help, and materials available to them through libraries.

When Martin (a legally blind student with only central vision) graduated from our program as an A student, he took a position as a librarian to the handicapped in the New York Public Library. But until a story about him and the services of the library was published in the New York Daily News (Engels, 1971, p. 9), he had few calls for services outside of an established group of "regulars." After the Daily News article described his work, he wrote to me:

> I am now being snowed under with blizzard force with requests to speak and demonstrate the library services available to the handicapped. Since October 1 (a four-month period) I have made almost 80 such presentations, demonstrations, workshops, and I am already booked for some 45 more. I am convinced...that this work of reaching out to the handicapped--to nonreaders of all types--must be the work of every public, school, and academic library. (Martin, April 5, 1972)

In writing to the School about his experiences, Martin further stated:

> The handicapped cannot come to us: we must go out to them with the information concerning services available to them...First of all, the librarian to the handicapped must do his homework and learn all about all the other tremendous programs: Jewish Braille Institute, Lighthouse for the Blind, Recording for the Blind, National Aid to Low Vision People, National Braille Press, National Braille Association, National Aid to the Visually Handicapped, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Xavier Society for the Blind...to name only a few...serving the handicapped in one way or another with library/information materials. He must also learn of the availability of information on such topics as "welfare," "income tax," "voting" in braille, large-type, or recordings and how the handicapped can get such information. He must even, if necessary, be willing to be instrumental in some way in getting production of such materials underway when they do not already exist. There are thousands, hundreds of thousands, of handicapped individuals now falling outside the scope of our program who could be served and MUST be served by a librarian to the handicapped. (Martin, April 5, 1972)

Martin emphasized the need for librarians to use their creative instincts and go to a wide range of places. His own daily record of contacts from September to December included, for example, "conventions, conferences, teachers groups,

library staff meetings, benefit functions, library schools, volunteer groups to help the handicapped, church groups, hospitals, service clubs." (Martin, January 31, 1972)

He concludes: "The librarian to the handicapped...must...learn about existing services and materials; go out to the handicapped, to the servants of the handicapped, and to the public in general; and coordinate volunteer programs for getting materials to the disabled."

For a successful agenda for the Decade for the Disabled, practical information control and dissemination is demanded. Local, regional, national, and international information resources, both sophisticated and simple, both government supported and privately funded, must be given a forum for improving information services to those persons who need them the most (Biscoe, 1983, p. 2).

In order to become involved as part of an "ongoing force" for the achievement of objectives for the Decade for the Disabled, I would like to suggest that you--in your college or university--organize a commission, or a committee, or a task force--whatever you would like to call it--on THE DECADE OF THE DISABLED for providing services for disabled persons in the library and on the campus in general.

What specifically do I mean? I suggest that you look at page three of the publication of the National Organization on Disability that is now being distributed. There you will see a sample of what one organization, the National Stroke Recovery Foundation, has formulated into a resolution to become a national partner in the Decade of the Disabled. I went down to the Headquarters for the National Organization on Disability on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C.,and asked if the people there thought it would be helpful for such actions to be taken by colleges and universities. They applauded the idea and gave me

UN DECADE OF DISABLED PERSONS

1. *WHEREAS,* The United Nations has officially proclaimed the period 1983-1992 as the Decade of Disabled Persons and has urged all nations and organizations to continue the momentum of the 1981 International Year of Disabled Persons in improving the quality of life for the world's half-billion persons with disabilities;

2. *WHEREAS,* the International Year of Disabled Persons led to widespread commitment and action to further the full participation of America's 35 million persons with disabilities in all aspects of national and community life;

3. *WHEREAS,* the International Year observance led to the proclamation by the President and the Congress of the United States of 1982 as the National Year of Disabled Persons, to the formation of the National Organization on Disability and to the widespread use of the slogan, "Meeting the Challenges Through Partnerships";

4. *WHEREAS,* these partnerships between persons with and without disabilities; between government and the private sector; and among state, local and national organizations are continuing to improve the lives of Americans with disabilities; and

5. *WHEREAS,* further progress should be made in the United States toward increasing understanding of the unmet needs and potential contribution of America's disabled citizens in furtherance of the following long-term goals of and for disabled persons as set forth during the 1981 and 1982 observances:

—Expanded Educational Opportunity

—Improved Access to Housing, Buildings and Transportation

—Greater Opportunity for Employment

—Greater Participation in Recreational, Social and Cultural Activities

—Expanded and Strengthened Rehabilitation Programs and Facilities

—Purposeful Application of Biomedical Research Aimed at Conquering Major Disabling Conditions

—Reduction in the Incidence of Disability through Accident and Disease Prevention

—Increased Application of Technology to Ameliorate the Effects of Disability

—Expanded International Exchange of Information and Experience to Benefit All Disabled Persons.

Now, therefore, but it

RESOLVED, that _____ supports the World Program of Action and Decade of Disabled Persons of the United Nations; and

RESOLVED, that _____ joins with the National Organization on Disability as a national partner in furthering the above long-term goals of and for Americans with disabilities.

ADOPTED DATE:

(Source: National Organization on Disability, 1983, p. 3)

samples of their publication, REPORT, to distribute to you today; and they expressed the hope that many of you will take such formal action so that your voice and activities can strengthen this total worldwide movement.

Now, turning to some suggestions for Public Awareness Targets During the Decade of the Disabled, I suggest for your consideration the following:

- To assist with the development of students' interpersonal skills. When the nondisabled encounter the disabled, the scripts on which they tend to lean so heavily may prove useless. Examination needs to be made of prevalent attitudes toward the disabled with a view to reaching more positive attitudes and understanding and to translating attitudes and understanding into effective behavior.
- To improve and increase dissemination of pertinent information about programs, services, and research to the people in the communities who are concerned with improving the lives of disabled persons and to disabled persons themselves.
- To exploit proven marketing techniques in the dissemination process.
- To form councils (or committees or task forces) on the Decade of Disabled Persons which promise support for the world program of action in the Decade of Disabled Persons of the United Nations, and to join with the National Organization on Disability (NOD) as a national partner in furthering the long-term goals of and for disabled Americans.

- To urge people to enter into such a partnership and to issue resolutions similar to the Decade of the Disabled Resolution issued by the National Stroke Recovery Foundation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the kind of society that the Decade of Disabled Persons hopes to realize is "one where there is not pity, but genuine respect for disabled people; where understanding is unostentacious and sincere; where it is the abilities of people, not their disabilities, that really count; and where the disabled have a fundamental right both to full citizenship and to social equality. (Morris, 1981, p. 8)

As a profession, we have no choice but to persist in trying to achieve quality library service for the disabled; we also need to have freedom to make some new choices about how to achieve quality library services in light of the new technologies; we need to find ways to dispel the myths and legends that hinder positive attitudes toward the disabled. You and I, as agents for positive change, can do more than we are doing to make a difference and thus to share in bringing about a new era for disabled people.

--Keynote Address delivered at workshop,
School of Library and Information Science,
Florida State University, May 6, 1983

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